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INFORMATION REPORT

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SUBJECT Organization of Western Prison Camp

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The railroad from Kostya to Vorkuta was started in 1940 and finished in November of 1943. The common name for the big camp that did the work was Pechlag, and it had the secret Soviet number "A-1". This is how the camp fit into the Soviet organizations:

GULAG Glavnoye Upravleniye Logerov (Principal Administration of Prison Camps). A division of NKVD administering all prison camps, except probably the PW camps.

GUZKDS Glavnoye Upravleniye Zhelzno-dorozhnogo Stroitel'stva (Principal Administration of Railroad Construction). A subdivision of GULAG, administering only those camps concerned with the construction of railroads.

Lager Prison camp, the next smaller unit under GUZKDS.

Pechlag Pechora Lager

Otdel Zhelzno-dorozhnogo Transporta (Railroad Transport Branch). The subdivision of each Lager concerned with the actual operation of the trains on the line being built by the Lager.

RJUDS Pechora Zhelzno-dorozhnogo Stroitel'stva (Pechora Railroad Construction Unit). A subdivision of Pechlag ("Pechora Lager") concerned with the construction of the railroad.

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2. [redacted] MTSMinistravto Putey Sobstveniya (Ministry of the Ways of Communication). Ministry of Communications. It takes over the administration and operation of railroads when they have been completed by a Lager.

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[redacted] there were about 90 thousand prisoners, and everybody worked on the railroad. In addition, 20% of the railroad workers were supplied by the Ministry of Communications. Some of these railroad men, especially in 1942 and 1943, were free people from the Baltic countries. They received a very decent salary. But most of the conductors, firemen and engineers were supplied from the three transport units of the camp and had been railroad workers before becoming prisoners. They used to travel from their home station to the next railroad transport unit, and then go home on the next train. The first transport unit was in Pechora, the second in Kochmes, and the third in Sivaya Maska.

[redacted] The name of Pechora Prison Camp applies to the entire distance from the Pechora river to Vorkuta, but the headquarters of the camp was in Abec, a town of six or seven thousand population.. This is where the equipment and supplies are located. There is another supply center at Pechora. There were construction sub-divisions with headquarters at Kas-Yu and Kochmes. There were five construction divisions in all. [Presumably at Pechora, Kas-Yu, Kochmes, Abec, and Vorkuta]. There was a waterways unit of Pechlag at Kamen Nos, four km north of the railroad on the Pechora river. Three km from the railroad, on the east bank, is a large forest combine called Les Kombinat, which belongs to Pechlag. There was also a coal mining command at Intlag [Inta], but that was a separate administration, under GULAG.

[redacted] The largest dairy farm of the whole Pechora Prison Camp is called Fion. It is six km west of Abec. There are other dairy farms just south of the railroad on the east bank of the Pechora, eight km upstream from the railroad on the river Sinya, and about 10 km from the bridge which crosses the Nozhim river. The prison camp also has a reindeer farm about 10 km northeast of Sivaya Maska, and a lumber mill on the Pechora river. The Intlag coal mine has a separate dairy farm, at Skodrovashir.

[redacted] When the Pechora road is finished they will send many of them to Siberia, especially the long-term prisoners who cannot go back to one of the less severe camps in the interior of Russia. Many of the prisoners at Pechora were sent there when the railroad at Murmansk was finished. Some of them were later sent to the Caucasus to work on a railroad there. They were sent from one camp to another by the trainload.

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